

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

Claims 1-26 (cancelled)

27. (currently amended) A clamping apparatus for an adjustable steering column for a vehicle, the clamping apparatus comprising a plurality of first plates having first clamping surfaces of a first hardness, and a plurality of second plates having second clamping surfaces of a second hardness and slidable relative to the first plates, wherein each first clamping surface contacts an adjacent second clamping surface,

wherein the first plates are steering column reach adjustment plates and the second plates are steering column rake adjustment plates, and

wherein all steering column reach adjustment plates of the clamping apparatus are made of a same first material, and all steering column rake adjustment plates of the clamping apparatus are made of a same second material.

28-29. (cancelled)

30. (currently amended) A clamping apparatus according to claim ~~27~~29, wherein the first plates are made

of mild steel and the second plates are made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

31. (currently amended) A clamping apparatus according to claim ~~27~~²⁹, wherein the first plates are made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy and the second plates are made of mild steel.

32-34. (cancelled)

35. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus according to claim 27.

36. (cancelled)

37. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus according to claim 30.

38. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus according to claim 31.

39. (previously presented) A vehicle incorporating an adjustable steering column according to claim 35.

40. (cancelled)

41. (previously presented) A vehicle incorporating an adjustable steering column according to claim 37.

42. (previously presented) A vehicle incorporating an adjustable steering column according to claim 38.

43. (currently amended) A clamping apparatus for an adjustable steering column for a vehicle, the clamping apparatus comprising at least two substantially flat plates that can be clamped to one another, the plates having clamping surfaces that slide relative to one another in a collision, the respective clamping surfaces being made of materials of different hardnesses such that, during the relative sliding of the clamping surfaces in a collision, the material of lower hardness is sheared by the material of higher hardness and a build-up of the sheared material is formed between the clamping surfaces so as to increase a clamping load.

44. (previously presented) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein one of the two plates is made of mild steel and the other of the two plates is made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

45. (previously presented) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein one of the two plates is a

steering column reach adjustment plate, and the other of the two plates is a steering column rake adjustment plate.

46. (previously presented) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the steering column reach adjustment plate is made of mild steel, and steering column rake adjustment plate is made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

47. (previously presented) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the steering column rake adjustment plate is made of mild steel, and steering column reach adjustment plate is made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

48. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 43.

49. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 44.

50. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 45.

51. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 46.

52. (previously presented) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 47.

53. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein said substantially flat plates include a plurality of first plates and a plurality of second plates, wherein each first plate can be clamped to a respective second plate, and each first plate is made of a same first material having a first hardness, and each second plate is made of a same second material having a second hardness.

54. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 53, wherein the first plates are steering column reach adjustment plates and the second plates are steering column rake adjustment plates.

55. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 54,
wherein the first plates are made of mild steel and the
second plates are made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

56. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 54,
wherein the first plates are made of mild aluminum or
aluminum alloy and the second plates are made of mild steel.

57. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle
incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 54.